

# The Suffering Servant, The Hope of the World

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Preacher: Jack Redmond

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everyone. I see they put a little clock up here so I don't go over.! Just out of curiosity, do you think Jesus wore a watch and said, yep, I've got ten more minutes.

But I've read a lot about the preachers of old and oftentimes you'd find a bunch of them or a few of them.

People would bring their lunch and the preachers would be on some hill somewhere or whatever. And they'd stand up and they'd preach and when they were tired they'd quit and the next guy would go up.

And people went to church all day Sunday because that was the Lord's Day. Now we come to church, we go, can't you get it done in 15 minutes?

I've got CDs at home, I don't need the worship time. But I figure if the Holy Spirit didn't have to wear a watch, I don't either.

[ 1 : 21 ] But I will get you out on time. That was only the clock. Thank you.

Thank you. You know, when you get a little older, it's a long way to the floor.

Well, I'd like to share with you this morning out of the book of Isaiah. Isaiah. And we're going to be looking in chapter 3, but before we do, let's bow our heads for a word of prayer.

Our most gracious and loving Father, we're so grateful today. So grateful to come into your house, to know that you watch over us, that you love us, that you're concerned about our relationship with you, that we are not a religion.

We come into relationship with the living God and learn to walk with him. And so, Father, as we look at the prophet Isaiah and what he has to say about Jesus, Father, we ask that you would speak to hearts as only you can do.

[ 2 : 55 ] Instruct us, O God, we thank you for the visitors that we have here this morning. We pray that there would be a blessing for them. We pray for the families of the ones that come here, Lord, for their children, or bring their children as we just enjoy the real choir.

And we find it quite interesting that they have such a zeal for God and to be able to sing about him. So, Father, we commit this time to your loving hands. We give you all the praise and the honor and the glory. For it's in Christ's name we pray.

Amen. Amen. So, if you... I hope you didn't see that.

You know, this past week has gone like that. If you can drop it, you drop it. You don't need a reason. All you need are hands that don't work right.

[ 4 : 10 ] But, at any rate, I would like for us to read in Isaiah 53, the first three verses.

And Isaiah is going to describe the suffering servant. He's going to...

He's going to describe the suffering servant to the Jewish people.

They were expecting a king to come. They thought Messiah would come as a king and would destroy their enemies. And they would no longer be under the rule of other nations.

But, Isaiah shows us the suffering servant. The unlikely one.

[ 5 : 25 ] And I thought good and hard as I... As I was going through this, would I have recognized him?

Would I have known him in such a way that through the Torah and the other Jewish books, would I have been able to pick him out?

Or, better yet, even in the New Testament, when Christ is born, and that's who we celebrate this time of the year, would I have believed him?

Or would I have been one in the crowd saying, crucify him? crucify him. You know, oftentimes when we read and we see things that are going on, you have to ask yourself, what would I do?

What would I believe? You know, we have the New Testament, so we can see that Christ is the fulfillment of all sort of prophecies.

[ 6 : 48 ] He is, and was, and forevermore will be, the Messiah for us. Our God and King.

Our leader. But I ask myself again, would I have known him? And you see, of all the countries in the world, America, we have so much familiarity with Christ.

Because we hear about him, we go to church, we believe, oftentimes, only from up here. if we were to give God, if we were to give God a place in our daily lives, he would be somewhere down the line, because after all, we have all kinds of things we like to do.

And God oftentimes gets left out. We get so busy making a living that we forget to make a life. We spend time looking that, if you will, pleasure becomes the God that we serve, whatever shape that may take, however that might come, you know, whether it's hunting or whether it's football.

Sometimes we get more excited about, what is it, 18 men on a team? Does anybody know?

[ 8 : 35 ] 11? Okay. Then I was close, because there's two teams. But, we get more excited about 11 men, or 22 men, counting with both teams.

We get more excited about that than we do coming to church. We get more excited about 22 men running up and down the field with a bag full of zipped up air.

And we get more excited about that than spending the time with the Lord. You know, sometimes you might get a few minutes in the morning.

And I can recall very clearly when I was in Vietnam, you know, you get yourself into a pickle sometimes. And you pray to God somewhat like this.

You go, dear, dear God, this is me. You give him your name in case he doesn't recognize you.

[ 9 : 51 ] Dear God, this is me. And I'm asking you to get me out of this mess. God, keep me alive for a little bit longer for a little bit longer and I promise I won't swear for two weeks.

And we sort of throw that out. We view God as somewhat of a cosmic Santa Claus. And he's soaring around there up in the Milky Way and everything just waiting for us to lay out our demands. or our pleading. And generally it comes in some what of a format where you're saying, God, if you will, I will.

And we forget that he's the one that created the heavens and the earth. but they were looking for one sent from God and Isaiah is going to talk to them about it.

Israel was looking for a deliverer. Someone who could deliver the nation of Israel from captivity into freedom.

[ 11 : 17 ] And feeling free is a great thing, isn't it? You realize you're free. You're free because you live in America.

But if you're a born-again Christian, and there aren't a lot of types of Christians, people say, well, there's Catholic Christians and Methodist Christians and Lutheran Christians, Catholic, you know, whatever your slant is, if you will.

there's only one way. There's only one that we can turn to. So I'm not a Catholic Christian, I'm not a Protestant Christian of any sorts, I'm a Christian, period.

In fact, I shouldn't even have to say I'm a born-again Christian, because that's like saying I'm a born-again born-again, because we have to be born-again to get into the kingdom.

Isaiah writes to tell Israel that the Savior coming is coming, and when he does, he will be an unlikely Savior. He'll be an unlikely Savior.

[ 12 : 42 ] Savior. You're looking for a king, you're looking for the purple robes, you're looking for the boldness of one that can come in and put his fist down and say enough is enough.

But Isaiah tells him he's going to come as a suffering servant. servant. That was something that was so far from the Jewish mind.

They couldn't wrap their hands around it. He's coming into this world as a suffering servant.

And you know what? if you don't believe him, you'll spend eternity away from God.

And we're going to look at that a little more here. But we're sort of entering the Christmas season here.

[ 13 : 53 ] There's 12 days left. And it does us good to turn our thoughts to Christ. He did not come into the world to provide a day to exchange gifts, though there's nothing wrong with that.

He did not give us a day when we could sit around and eat too much. That's one of my side habits. Jesus did not come to give us Christmas trees, Santa Claus, and all the glitter and lights. He did not come to give us Yule logs, Christmas carols, tinsel, and eggnog.

Jesus came into the world to give us something that cannot be purchased at a steep Black Friday discount.

He did not come into the world to give us something that can't be ordered by Cyber Monday, or something that cannot be wrapped up and placed under a tree.

[ 15 : 20 ] Jesus came to give us the most important gift of all. He came to give us salvation, the forgiveness of our sins, an eternal life, and a home in heaven.

sadly, the world does not want what Jesus came to give.

I share quite a bit when I'm out and about and get together with people, and I'll generally ask them a question something like this.

If you were to die today and stand before Almighty God, and he were to say to you, why should I let you into my heaven?

What would your answer be? Almost all the time, they'll start laying out their credentials.

[ 16 : 39 ] I serve in the church. I got a peek at the tithing records. I'm one of the biggest givers.

Now, as I'm doing this, I'm also patting myself on the back for being such a good person. And we think that somehow or another by doing the right things that God will let us into heaven.

But I'm, I also want to tell you something, and that's that every one of us in this auditorium are sinners.

sinners. We're all sinners, and we come to God like a beggar would go to a dumpster to find something to eat.

And when he does, he invites the other beggars over. Come on, we're going to have a feast here tonight. Boy, they threw away a lot of good food. to be a Christian doesn't, in one sense, it doesn't matter what church you go to.

[ 18 : 06 ] It's what's going on in here. Have you come into a relationship with the living God? Now, I'm not when I say it matters not what church you go to.

There are churches that teach God's word, and there are churches that just talk about politics or talk about social issues.

But when I come into a relationship with someone, what I want to do is to know them on a personal level.

And oftentimes, we all have a hard time really opening up and saying, hey, I got an anger issue, I yell at my wife all the time. Oh, come to our hospital.

More than a home for sinners, this is a hospital for sinners. sinners. We try to help people become who they can be in Christ.

[ 19 : 22 ] And walking down an aisle, giving money, saying a prayer, none of that matters if it isn't coming from right here.

and for a great many that fill churches, it's all up here. You can miss heaven by 18 inches.

Because your hope and your faith rests in the wrong gateway or key, if you will.

You're trusting in your own goodness. And I'll tell you, I got saved back in 73. And at that point in time, I was drinking quite a bit.

I'd gotten back from Vietnam, got beat up for serving over there. And I was quite disillusioned. and I found that if I kept drinking, I didn't have to keep thinking.

[ 20 : 37 ] And so that's where I was. But then as soon as you sober up, you find that you're right back where you were. And you've still got all the things going on up here that were going up before you opened the bottle.

So before you opened the bottle. And the way to deal with that is to come to Christ. Well, so there's been a number of funerals lately that we've gone to, a number of people that have got cancer, a lot of families that are having problems and financial stress and all of that good stuff.

And people will battle with that, some commit suicide, et cetera. But they could have peace in their hearts if they looked to Christ.

Christ. He came for that very reason, to set the captives free from whether it's drugs or whether it's alcohol or anything else.

Now, I'm not getting down on those things. I had a friend that drank a case of Coke a day in the small bottles. He drank a case every day. that wasn't healthy either.

[ 22 : 23 ] So when we speak of addictions or anything else, it doesn't always come in the form of drugs or alcohol.

It can be a number of different things. things. But as we enter this Christmas season, if you will, we look to see Christ in the world and what he's doing.

And it's really sort of mind boggling how he can come in. I got to the end of my rope back then. And on March 23rd, 1973, I said, God, I don't know if you're real or not, but if you're real, please help me, because I'm awfully screwed up.

And God met me right where I was. He didn't put a bunch of conditions on it. I could see Jesus going up, right?

[ 23 : 43 ] Now, you'll all agree with this. Jesus goes up to Peter and says, Peter, go a styer way, go home, go to the barber, get a haircut.

shed your fishing clothes and put on a three-piece suit. Throw your cigarettes away.

And the list can go on and on. And he says, and then follow me and I will make you fishers of men. what Christ did say is, come.

Come as you are with all the baggage that you might carry and understand that when you come here, people are going to love you.

People are going to reach out to you because that's what we do as a Christian. You don't come to church and then get run over by 200 people or something as soon as the last amen goes.

[ 25 : 03 ] You know? I've been in churches like that and I've got footprints on my back to prove it. Oftentimes you'll stick around here and you'll find people sticking around an hour, two hours after the service.

They come before the service starts. why? For fellowship. To develop relationships with one another.

They didn't like what Isaiah was telling them. they refuse if you will, they refuse the Messiah and cling ever tighter to the sins and lies which destroy them, destroy their souls, and damn them to eternal flames.

this message that Isaiah is presenting, it's an unbelievable message. They didn't want to believe it. Many of us here didn't want to believe it. there was a Christian that I was with over in Vietnam and I'd never met anybody like him.

[ 26 : 43 ] When we were writing letters or reading magazines or whatever during your down time, he would have his nose in the Bible.

And when you went on R&R;, no matter what country, he was a lifetime serviceman. He would always go to some place, and when he got to that some place, there were Christians that met him. He would somehow or another connect with these Christians in different countries. And he would go while the rest of us went to a bar and got wasted.

He went over and stayed with some families and became like part of that family. And he did that for, I think, it was 28 years.

before he retired. Because he's part of a family that's universal. And you find that we have wonderful brothers and sisters around the world.

[ 28 : 10 ] Friends in China, friends in Mexico, friends in South America, wherever it might be, there are Christians.

And somehow or another, he would connect and join his family in some foreign shore. Isaiah, this was an unbelievable, unbelievable message, because Isaiah opens up with two questions.

He says, who has believed our message? Who has believed our message?

And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? told. Consider this, who has believed our report?

First of all, the word believed means to have confidence in or to trust. The word report means news.

[ 29 : 32 ] And the question is literally, who is going to put any confidence in confidence in the news we are sharing. What news is Isaiah sharing?

In Isaiah 52, verses 13 and 15, I read this. But you will not go out in haste, nor will you go as fugitives, for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your guard.

Behold, my servant will prosper, he will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted, just as many were astonished at you, my people.

So his appearance was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. Thus, he will sprinkle many nations.

Kings will shut their mouths on account of him, for what had not been told them, they will see, and what they had not heard, they will understand.

[ 30 : 56 ] And here, as Isaiah is going through that, who's going to believe our report? Who's going to believe our report?

Where are you at right now in your walk with God? If you have one, there may be some in here that know of God, but you do not know him on a personal level.

And you might wonder, how is that possible? That's what Christ came for, to make it possible. He came to make it possible, he wants a personal relationship with you.

He says, who's going to believe? Have confidence in or trust? Now, I want to draw a little picture. I want to draw a little picture from you. I don't know how many of you may have seen this, but I believe his last name was Walensky.

[ 32 : 32 ] And he put a tightrope across the Grand Canyon, and all of that incredible heat rising up was enough to almost melt and almost melt your shoes.

He did it without a harness. He put a wire across Niagara Falls to Canada, and all that water splashing up and on that wire could make the wire very slippery.

and he walked from one side to the other. And as he did, he prayed, God, this is for you.

And again without a harness. And so you're all this morning being transported, if you will, in your mind for a moment.

you're standing on the edge of Niagara Falls. And this guy's got a reputation for doing things on a wire that you can't imagine.

[ 33 : 47 ] And he says, how many of you believe that I am the world's greatest tightrope walker? That's what everybody says. That's what the newspapers print.

That's what you hear about me again and again. How many of you believe? I can walk over and come back. And the crowd's ecstatic.

They raise their hand. Some raise their hand because it's kind of like the thing to do. You kind of look around and everybody else is raising their hand.

You don't want to be an odd duck. You don't want to think, oh, what's wrong with that guy? He isn't raising his hand. So it might be peer pressure that gets you to go.

What if it's true? Maybe he can. And if enough hands go up, maybe he will. And you shoot yours up.

[ 34 : 55 ] and then after all of that, he says to the crowd, he says, how many of you believe I can do it with a man on my shoulders?

Hands go up for the same reason. And he says, okay, which one of you will be that man?

do you believe in Christ enough that you will give your life to him by trusting in his ability to use his feet to get you to the other side?

In so many ways, that's a simple faith. faith. It's what people do. And every one of you exercise faith every day.

You drive a car, you don't know who the mechanic is, or generally, you don't know a whole lot about him. So you're driving a car down the highway or interstate, 70, 80, maybe 90.

[ 36 : 16 ] and you're trusting, you have faith in this guy you've never met. You eat food in a restaurant that you don't know what they put in it.

My point is here that you exercise faith every single day. Every single day you exercise faith.

I notice you're all sitting. That's a step of faith, isn't it? You sat down on a chair hoping it would hold you up, but it's done it all the time in the past, so why not believe it today?

The reason being is because the chairs that you've sat in in the picture, the chairs you've sat in in the past have always supported you.

When I was in Bible school, I'd go, time to go get my money. Get your money. Where are you getting money from? Because nobody had money in Bible school.

[ 37 : 38 ] Well, you just went up to get it. And why? Because you knew it would be there. You need money for laundry. And I'd go up and sure enough, it was there.

Somebody sent money. And they always sent it at the right time. And some of us believe what we read.

And some of us go through it like a textbook. I look at it and I go right here.

It says God's will for Jack's life. It was written to me. Your Bible was written to you.

God's and if we'll take God at his word, and the scriptures tell us God will not lie, if we believe that, we can cast mountains into the sea.

[ 38 : 50 ] We can love our enemies. I don't know how many of them you got, but we took a trip to Hawaii for our 35th some years back.

And there was a Vietnamese man that was sitting right next to us. and I was kind of wrestling in my heart, especially when I tried to reach out to him and talk and he said his dad was an officer in Vietnam for the Viet Cong Army.

So your dad killed a lot of my friends. what did Jesus say? Love your enemies.

So we took pictures for him because he didn't have a camera and we did things to try to reach out to him and show him the love of Christ.

And in so doing, God changed my heart. Those people were only protecting their homes and their homeland and we would do the same thing.

[ 40 : 28 ] But you see, Christ changes the heart, your heart, my heart. In Isaiah 52, 13, Isaiah speaks of the coming Messiahs.

coming Messiah, his wisdom, his exaltation, his proven character, and his coming glory.

The verses describe the kind of Messiah that the Jews were expecting. king. They were looking for a king, they were expecting a deliverer.

They were looking for the mighty general king who would go to war to deliver the Jewish people from their enemies. And Isaiah, or in verse 14, Isaiah makes some statements that must have really shocked the Jews.

He tells us that the Messiah will suffer as no man has ever or will ever. He tells the people will be astonished and appalled by what they see.

[ 41 : 57 ] And he tells them that when Messiah comes, his visit, visage, if you will, will be marred.

The word visage refers to the Messiah's appearance, how he looks. It says it's going to be marred, it's not going to look the way that you would think a king would look or any person.

And the word marred means to be destroyed or annihilated. when the Messiah comes, his appearance will be utterly destroyed and the people of Israel will be appalled by what they witness. Think about that. This Jesus who lives in heaven, who created not only the heavens but the earth and all that is in it, and he chooses to leave heaven to come down here, take on the form of a man, to walk for 33 years and die.

It's always up here, isn't it? The time's coming. mission. He had a mission. He was fulfilling that commission, if you will.

[ 43 : 45 ] And he looked straight forward to that day when he would die. and yet when he was in the garden of Gethsemane, he cried out to his father, if there's in any way, let this cup from me pass.

In other words, don't make me go through this. and the next thing you know, he's hanging on a cross.

He's been beaten beyond recognition. Now, I recognize you folks and some of you, like Tim and John and some of the other ones here, I've ministered together with for about 40, not 40 years.

At any rate, since 1981 when we officially called this a church.

We did before that, but we officially registered with the state and everything as a church. So, it's been a long time, and I know those men, and I know what makes them tick.

[ 45 : 26 ] Why? Because we're in relationship. And they were in relationship with Jesus, the disciples were, and yet he was beaten so bad that their best friends couldn't recognize him.

They said that in an interview with Mel Gibson who did the, pardon me, Passion of the Christ.

I left my brain in the other room there, so, but he could not show the movie that he was creating and expect anybody to really come and look at it.

Because the beating Christ took was so horrific that he would look like somebody you've never known or never met before.

In verse 15 it says he will sprinkle many nations and that word sprinkle means to spatter.

[ 47 : 03 ] It's the image of the high priest putting blood, sprinkling blood on the sacrifice, on the mercy seat. Christ's blood on the mercy seat for you and me.

Think about your own life and what your walk is like and what you do when no one is looking. Think about your own life and realize that Christ had his blood put on the mercy seat so that we who were dead and our trespasses and sins may live.

When I come to Christ in 73 it was like everything changed. The grass turned green.

I'm getting my signs. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Yep. there's a few people back there going so in a second here we'll close in prayer but if you read that and you take you take the time to really think okay to really think about what Isaiah is telling the people and you put try to put yourself in that position I

could be a prophet that people liked I could be a prophet that they want a stone to death like they did

Stephen I could be like Jesus and when I call myself a Christian or as soon as I call myself a Christian they're going I saw you do this somebody else says I saw you do that you're not a Christian being a Christian isn't sinless it's learning to walk with the Lord and as you walk with him you become more and more sinless you catch that why because he changes this he changes this the Jews couldn't buy the suffering part of

[ 50 : 06 ] Messiah they were expecting a king we have our expectations as well and perhaps what if Jesus was sitting next year today it says that we might entertain angels unaware doesn't it so you don't know I sometimes wondered that when I drove by somebody hitchhiking what if that's an angel that God sent to test my heart what if when I got something you know like Tricia there with her cancer and Jim with his and you don't hear them complaining because they know who's writing the story of their life

God is writing your story and you in the back there will be done in a couple of minutes sometimes you have to encourage people to go and praise the Lord but as we spend time with him and think about what he has gone through and I didn't even get into some of that where it's talking about his relationship with people and what he looked like I can't get beyond the fact that he was beaten so bad that nobody could recognize him and he did that for me and he did that for you and before I invite Harold up which I'm going to do in a second if you would like if there's someone here that knows Christ but has not been walking and you'd like to talk to either one of us or both of us feel free if there's someone here if there's someone here that has never come to Christ understand that God may be speaking to you today what if today was your last day on earth I buried a lot of people all the way from one hour long up to the 90s well in fact even a couple of them over 100 we think we got plenty of time but our time is winding down and if you're not ready to face him you'll spend eternity separated from him in a place he refers to as hell if you want to rebuttal that or talk with me about it or try to understand it and

I can help or Tim can help let us know for now let's close in a word of prayer if your neighbors sleep them wake them up please so let's let's pray our heavenly father we're so grateful today for all that you have done you sent your son to die Christ prayed let this cup pass if it's your will that was key and it wasn't God's will that the cup would pass but that he would take and drink of that cup and so father then they hung him on a cross and for the first time in all eternity this one this

Jesus for the first time in all eternity experienced sin this time he took my sins and those of everyone else in this auditorium this morning and those sins were placed on him and that's when we hear him cry out Eli Eli lama sabbatni my God my God why hast thou forsaken me the only time in all of eternity that he was separated from his father was when he bore my sin so father we thank you and we thank you for the time of fellowship afterwards and whatever's going on this day and I thank you God that you were you were there to welcome me home and when I pass from this earthly life you'll be there for me again just as you have been every single day so father we thank you and we commit our lives to your hands and I pray that you would not let the individuals here in this auditorium this morning forget it but that they might reflect upon you and what you have done for us for we ask it in

[ 57 : 01 ] Jesus name amen